

TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT TITLE	BETTER WORK BANGLADESH
REGION/COUNTRY	SOUTH ASIA/Bangladesh
PROJECT DURATION	September 16, 2014 – December 31, 2016
FUNDING LEVEL	USD 1,398,563
PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED	<p>Harsh working conditions in garment factories have been at the center of a large and growing debate about globalization and labor standards for years. Low wages, long hours, high temperatures, excessive noise, poor air quality, unsanitary conditions, and abuse (both verbal and physical) are often cited as evidence of non-compliant labor practices which characterize production in developing countries such as Bangladesh.</p> <p><u>National Context</u></p> <p>Bangladesh has experienced very rapid growth in its ready-made garment (RMG) sector, now the country's largest export earner and the second largest RMG exporter in the world, employing nearly 4 million workers in about 3,500 factories. This growth has fueled employer abuse of freedom of association, occupational health and safety (OSH) standards, working conditions, wage payments, and other labor rights, magnified by weak labor administration and a lack of effective human resource management. The needs were tragically highlighted by the Tazreen factory fire in 2012 and Rana Plaza collapse in 2013.</p>
PROJECT OBJECTIVES	<p>To improve the life of the workers, their families and their communities and increase Bangladesh RMG sector competitiveness, consistent with the Better Work objective of supporting decent work in the apparel sector, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring compliance with national labor law and international labor standards;• Strengthening government's ability to conduct labor inspections; and• Increasing the capacity of worker and employer representatives to engage in social dialogue.

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PROJECT STRATEGY

Better Work improves working conditions in global supply chains by combining labor monitoring and training to apparel factories around the world. Better Work focuses on market incentives for both producers and buyers, as labor law compliance increases competitiveness and international firms are driven by the need to protect their reputation and image. The Better Work Bangladesh program strategy (funded by USDOL and other donors) is to build stakeholder capacity at the: 1) a factory level to improve working conditions and establish participating factory management systems; and 2) national structural level for sustainable change in labor administration, industrial relations, and social dialogue.

PROJECT IMPACT/RESULTS

- ✓ Better Work Bangladesh has a full complement of staff oriented through strategic planning and training.
- ✓ More than 17 factories with a total of 43,000 workers have officially registered to participate in the Better Work program, with 36 sourcing brands.
- ✓ Better Work Bangladesh has established a project advisory committee and held extensive learning seminars with factories on establishing and rolling out the Better Work program.
- ✓ Better Work Bangladesh has partnered with projects and organizations addressing RMG sector fire and building safety.

GRANTEE

International Labor Organization (ILO)

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Last update, December 2015